

BEFORE THE UNITED STATES ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
HUNTINGTON DIVISION

COPY

In the Matter of:
Public Meeting In Re:
The General Jenkins House

Transcript of proceedings had at a hearing
held in the aforementioned matter on Thursday,
the 10th day of May, 2001, beginning at 7:12 p.m.,
at the Huntington High School, Huntington, Cabell
County, West Virginia.

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1 APPEARANCES: On Behalf of the Corps of Engineers:
2 Mr. Wayne Budrus
3 Maj. Ken Koebberling
4 Steve Wright
5 Bob Maslowski
6 Todd Mitchell
7 Doretta McComas
8 Carol Turley
9 Wally Dean
10 Ben Borda
11 Adam Scarberry
12 Randy Campbell
13 Ginger Mullins
14 Lea Bodmer
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1 MR. BUDRUS: Okay. I'd like to
2 thank you all for coming tonight. My name is
3 Wayne Budrus. I'm from the Army Corps of
4 Engineers, project manager for the Robert C. Byrd
5 Project. And the General Jenkins House in Green
6 Bottom is part of that project.

7 All right. What we'd like to do tonight is
8 -- I think you all know that we've been authorized
9 with the Water Resources Development Act of 2000
10 to preserve and restore the Jenkins House. What
11 we'd like to do is gather input as far as
12 comments, ideas, recommendations that we can use
13 in developing that strategy to restore the house.

14 Before I get started, we have several people
15 here tonight. We have Greg Parsons from
16 Congressman Rahall's office. Greg.

17 From the West Virginia Division of Culture
18 and History, we have Nancy Herholdt, the
19 Commissioner.

20 And, Nancy, if you'd like to introduce your
21 staff?

22 MS. NANCY HERHOLDT: Okay. Like I
23 say, I'm Nancy Herholdt from the Division --
24 Commissioner of the Division of Culture and

1 History. This is the assistant director of
2 programming, Stan Bumgardner, who is also the
3 liaison for our historic sites; and from our
4 Historic Preservation Unit, our senior
5 archeologist, Joanna Wilson; and deputy state
6 historic preservation officer and director of our
7 H&P Unit, Susan Pierce; and from our archives and
8 history staff, Joe Banks.

9 MR. BUDRUS: And if you have any
10 comments you'd like to make before we get started?

11 MS. HERHOLDT: Well, I'm new. I
12 was appointed in February. But my first Saturday
13 -- this will be very brief. The first Saturday
14 after I was appointed in February, my family and I
15 visited the Jenkins House. We got a fantastic
16 tour from Greg, and I'm sure it wasn't unusual.
17 But he was gracious enough to let me walk in on
18 him.

19 And I just want to tell you all, though some
20 of you have been involved with the Jenkins Project
21 for many areas, I am so excited about the
22 possibilities there, and I'm happy to be here at
23 this point in time where we're going to start
24 moving in a direction to get into a major

1 restoration, and that will allow the Culture of
2 History to have many opportunities historic
3 interpretation of all the different stories that
4 relate to the Jenkins Plantation.

5 And then I also am really happy to see all of
6 you here because we also want it to be a community
7 center for the community, a source of pride and a
8 place where you can be involved and work with us.
9 Coming here tonight and hearing what you have to
10 say is very important because it will help us make
11 good decisions and make good plans in the very
12 near future as we start on this process.

13 So thank you very much.

14 MR. BUDRUS: Thank you, Nancy.

15 From the West Virginia Division of Natural
16 Resources, we have Tom Dotson and Kem Shaw right
17 here.

18 From the Corps of Engineers, we have Major
19 Ken Koebberling, the Deputy District Engineer; and
20 then Steve Wright from our Public Affairs Office;
21 Bob Maslowski, our archeologist; Ben Borda and
22 Ginger Mullins from the Planning Division; Wally
23 Dean from Planning; Lea Bodmer from Real Estate;
24 and I think there's a couple of others here that I

1 forgot, possibly -- Randy Campbell and Todd
2 Mitchell.

3 I guess one administrative announcement. If
4 anyone needs to find the washroom, the nearest
5 ones are just outside and across the hall.
6 They're pretty easy to get to. If you just go
7 outside and take a right, they're right across the
8 hall.

9 Okay. What I'll do now is get into an
10 overview of the history -- it's not the history
11 from the 1800s but the history of the Corps'
12 involvement with the house - before we request
13 input as far as recommendations and ideas on what
14 we should do as far as the restoration goes.

15 Okay. As I said before, this is part of the
16 Robert C. Byrd Project, formerly the Gallipolis
17 Project, part of the mitigation for the impacts we
18 did when we constructed the new locks at Robert C.
19 Byrd.

20 This is the oldest known photo that I'm aware
21 of, a 1906 photo of the house. You can see some
22 outbuildings adjacent to the house, some barns
23 here. The Ohio River is back here and Ohio is
24 over here.

1 This is a photo taken after the
2 rehabilitation in 1992. This gives you a newer
3 shot of the house.

4 You probably are all more familiar with the
5 house than I am.

6 Okay. From the beginning of the Byrd
7 Project, or Gallipolis at the time, in the
8 environmental impact statement done in '81, it
9 included the Green Bottom site. And the Green
10 Bottom site was part of the mitigation for
11 construction impacts due to the locks'
12 construction.

13 A memorandum of agreement was signed in 1986
14 -- and can everybody one hear me back there just
15 to make sure? Okay -- with the National Advisory
16 Council, the state historic preservation officer
17 and the Corps of Engineers. They basically
18 stipulated all the archeological survey
19 requirements for any work done at the site,
20 required an historic preservation management plan,
21 required the Corps to rehabilitate the house, and
22 the West Virginia DNR at that time would take over
23 the house and use it as an office once the
24 rehabilitation was completed.

1 In March of '88, we did a master plan for the
2 Gallipolis Project. It included the
3 rehabilitation of the house, also that the house
4 would be used as an office for the DNR.

5 In 1988, the property was purchased as part
6 of the Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, and
7 at that time we had a lot of public involvement,
8 hunting issues, nonhunting issues, historic
9 issues, environmental issues, and that led to the
10 Water Resources Development Act of 1988 which
11 added language which prevented the transfer of the
12 property to the state of West Virginia.

13 All the plans up to this point had us buying
14 the property, creating a mitigation site,
15 rehabilitating the house and then turning it over
16 in fee or turning it over by deed to the state of
17 West Virginia.

18 From this point on, though, that's changed
19 and now it's leased to the West Virginia DNR, and
20 the house and surrounding acreage is subleased to
21 the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

22 Okay. Prior to that sublease, we did a
23 memorandum of understanding between the agencies
24 involved, the West Virginia DNR, the Division of

1 Culture and History and the Army Corps of
2 Engineers. Everyone involved agreed that the
3 Jenkins House should be made available for public
4 interpretation. We all agreed that this should
5 best be accomplished by the Division of Culture
6 and History because that's where their expertise
7 is.

8 At that time, it was agreed that the site
9 would include the house and approximately four
10 acres surrounding it.

11 There's an additional buffer area which would
12 be managed by the DNR but could be used by Culture
13 and History on a coordinated basis.

14 We once again reaffirmed we would
15 rehabilitate the house and, subject to available
16 funding, Culture and History would explore the
17 ideas of subleasing and then explore the
18 restoration of the property. Once again, that was
19 subject to available funding.

20 In 1989, the area was leased to the West
21 Virginia DNR, Division of Natural Resources, for
22 them to administer and maintain. Part of the
23 lease was to preserve the Jenkins House and fully
24 coordinate any restoration or rehabilitation

1 efforts that they would undergo.

2 Okay. In 1990, Culture and History had a
3 contractor prepare a design for the
4 rehabilitation, which was funded by the Corps.
5 That followed on in 1991 with a contract to
6 rehabilitate the house. It was an \$88,000
7 contract to Cravens Construction. Work was
8 finished in '92.

9 Upon completion of the rehabilitation, the
10 house was occupied by the West Virginia DNR as an
11 office and a home for -- a residence for the
12 person who managed the site.

13 Between 1992 and 1994, the Corps of Engineers
14 completed its mitigation efforts at the Green
15 Bottom site. What that included was the
16 construction of this new wetland area, the dark
17 blue area. We created roughly 75 to 80 acres of
18 new wetlands as part of the mitigation for the
19 project at Byrd. We constructed dikes on both
20 ends of the wetlands and a water supply system
21 from the Ohio River to feed that during dry
22 periods and then some nesting islands to enhance
23 it for wildlife management.

24 We also constructed a road on the upstream

1 end of the project and a boat ramp which was
2 originally used by the DNR but since has been
3 opened to the public.

4 The existing wetlands, the light blue area
5 here, all we did was construct a preservation weir
6 at the downstream end of the wetlands, at the
7 outlet. I think the elevation of the weir was
8 544. And why that was done was to maintain a
9 minimal level of wetlands in case anything should
10 ever happen. There's a lot of beaver dams in the
11 area. We were going to maintain it at a minimum
12 level of 544.

13 A VOICE: Where is the house in
14 that picture?

15 MR. BUDRUS: The house is right
16 here in this white area -- or yellow area, yes.

17 Okay. In 1993, a development plan was
18 prepared for the Cabell County Historical
19 Landmarks Commission by Professor Baroni from
20 Fairmont State, and it gives us an idea or an
21 inspection of the rehab work that we had done. It
22 basically said that everything was in fairly good
23 condition, finishes, doors and windows, roof, some
24 groundwater leakage in the basement, and

1 recommended a perimeter drain. The exterior of
2 the house was in good order, but they did note
3 that in the past, there had been some flooding on
4 both the first floor and the basement.

5 Okay. Based on some requests from the
6 public, we did evaluate potential impacts of the
7 adjacent wetlands on the house in 1992 and later
8 in 1995. The inspection in 1992 showed the
9 basement dry, some mold and mildew present, but no
10 structural distress was noted at that time.

11 Once again, it was evaluated in 1995, found
12 some water in the floor drains, once again some
13 mold and mildew present. The West Virginia DNR
14 did note that during heavy rains, you did have
15 water coming in through the foundation through
16 cracks in the walls. A lot of surface water
17 during heavy rains would come in against the
18 foundation and come through.

19 There were no signs of structural distress at
20 the time, but it did note that some of the ground
21 did slope towards the house.

22 Conclusions: The major problem as far as
23 water infiltration appears to be surface run-off.
24 The floor drain system wasn't functioning

1 completely at the time, but no evidence that the
2 existing wetland was affecting the basement. And
3 I've got a slide later to depict that graphically
4 for you.

5 Recommendations: Clean out and repair the
6 drain system, repair it, and install a foundation
7 drain as a last resort, some sloping of the area
8 to take the run-off away from the house. Some of
9 the downspouts were dropping water against the
10 house -- some work to get that water away from the
11 house when it rains.

12 This gives you an idea of where the wetlands
13 are in relation to the basement of the house, the
14 level of the wetlands and the level of the
15 basement floor.

16 We surveyed this first in June of '92, and at
17 that time there was a 6-foot difference between
18 the wetlands and the basement floor. In January
19 of '95, it was a 6.2-foot difference. In April of
20 2001 -- we had someone out there about a month ago
21 -- a 5.3-foot difference between the level of the
22 wetlands and the basement floor.

23 But you have to note that this data is
24 affected by seasonal rainfall effects and beaver

1 dam activity behind the house, which is going to
2 have some effect on that.

3 If you come out there in a dry period, say a
4 drought like last summer or the summer before, it
5 may have been even lower than this. So, that's
6 going to be affected by those three items.

7 Okay. In March of '96 the house was
8 subleased by the West Virginia DNR to the Division
9 of Culture and History. The sublease requires the
10 provision of O&M funding, a resident to occupy the
11 house, an annual meeting to coordinate upcoming
12 events, especially critical in coordinating with
13 opening seasons for different hunting seasons when
14 you're going to have a lot of hunters out there --
15 that may be a time when you don't want to have a
16 big historical effort going on at the same time --
17 and also the provision of a yearly management
18 plan.

19 Okay. The latest language was WRDA 2000,
20 Water Resources Development Act of 2000 -- and I
21 copied the language out of the act. It says that
22 the secretary shall ensure the preservation and
23 restoration of the structure known as the Jenkins
24 House in accordance with the standards for sites

1 listed on the National Register of Historic
2 Places.

3 Up until this point, our authorization has
4 only been to preserve and rehabilitate. This
5 takes us to another level which we didn't have the
6 authority to do before. And that's one of the
7 reasons we're here tonight, to gather input on
8 what people think that should be and how this is
9 going to cause some interactions between the
10 environmental side and the historical side.

11 If we can get all the input, we can develop a
12 strategy that everyone can live with and hopefully
13 everyone thinks is a good strategy. We don't want
14 to develop something in a void and have a lot of
15 problems we had when Green Bottom first started or
16 when the Corps tried to do its construction at
17 Green Bottom.

18 There is one significant issue as far as the
19 flood plain goes. The hundred-year flood
20 elevation at the site is 560.8 feet. The first
21 floor is at 559.4, which is roughly a 72-year
22 frequency -- pretty close to the hundred year but
23 just below it.

24 The ground elevation at the house is at

1 554.3, which is a 20-year frequency. Okay.
2 That's the elevation of the ground right adjacent
3 to the house. That quickly drops off to 550 on
4 three sides of the house, basically within a
5 hundred feet of the house, because the house is
6 built on a knoll.

7 Okay. To give you an idea of what that
8 means, as far as potential flooding does, we put
9 together some probabilities of flooding. This is
10 just to give you an idea. The probability of the
11 first floor being flooded in any one year is 1.39
12 percent. Then as you go down, the probability of
13 it happening once in the next 10, 20 and 30 years
14 raises up to a pretty significant percentage, and
15 that's something that we have to consider as we
16 develop the plan.

17 Go ahead.

18 MR. NED JONES: Is the first floor
19 the basement?

20 MR. BUDRUS: The first floor is the
21 one you walk up four or five steps to. That's
22 considered the first. All right. It's elevated,
23 what, four or five feet above the ground.

24 MR. BOB MASLOWSKI: Yeah.

1 MR. BUDRUS: Yes. So, these are
2 some of the issues that we're going to have to
3 work through as we develop the strategy.

4 I guess now if anybody has any questions over
5 what I've gone over, I'd be happy to try to answer
6 those. But if you would, if I could get your
7 names so that we could record that, though.

8 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: My name is Pete
9 Samosky, and I have a question. In 1995, you said
10 that the DNR took over the lease and they were
11 going to have a full-time resident there. Did
12 that happen? Did that happen? Because I've been
13 there over 50 times and never seen anybody there.

14 MR. BUDRUS: Okay. When the DNR
15 took over the property in 1988, the resident
16 manager did live there. Culture and History took
17 over the property in I think '96.

18 MR. NED JONES: Is there somebody
19 there now staffing the place?

20 MR. BUDRUS: Based on the funding
21 that they have available, they have someone there
22 three days a week I think is how it works right
23 now.

24 MR. MASLOWSKI: Originally they had

1 someone living there.

2 MR. BUDRUS: Okay. Originally they
3 had someone living there.

4 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Who is there
5 now?

6 MR. GREG MILLER: I'm there every
7 day.

8 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: You're there
9 every day?

10 MR. GREG MILLER: Yes, sir, every
11 day.

12 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Seven days a
13 week?

14 MR. GREG MILLER: Seven days a
15 week. I'm not there 24 hours a day, but I'm there
16 at least one hour a day. It is not the same hour
17 every day, but there are three days out of the
18 week where I'm there the same hours.

19 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: What hours are
20 those?

21 MR. GREG MILLER: I'm usually there
22 from eight o'clock in the morning till about six
23 o'clock in the evening, and I'm there Wednesdays,
24 Thursdays and Saturdays.

1 MR. BUDRUS: Yes, he has been there
2 because we've made visits.

3 MR. SAMOSKY: I've never seen you
4 there.

5 MR. STEVE WRIGHT: Folks, we're
6 getting lost here on names. And if we just -- if
7 you can, identify yourself.

8 MR. GREG MILLER: I'm Greg Miller.

9 MR. WRIGHT: He's the manager at
10 the site.

11 MR. BUDRUS: Any other questions?

12 MS. KAREN NANCE: Have you any idea
13 -- Karen Nance. Do you know where the level of
14 the foundation is? You have the basement floor
15 there, but of course that's not the foundation to
16 the house. Do you know how deep that foundation
17 is?

18 MR. BUDRUS: The thickness of the
19 foundation?

20 MS. KAREN NANCE: How deep it goes.

21 MR. BUDRUS: That I don't have, the
22 thickness.

23 MR. TODD MITCHELL: Yeah, we've got
24 it. We did an elevation on it.

1 MR. BUDRUS: You've got the level
2 of the basement floor, but the foundation below
3 it, we don't have that -- the footers below it.
4 No, we haven't excavated that.

5 MS. KAREN NANCE: You don't have
6 the footings, the stone footings?

7 MR. BUDRUS: What we have is when
8 you walk into the basement, the level of the
9 floor. To get down to the footers below that,
10 that has never been excavated, has it Bob?

11 MR. MASLOWSKI: No, it has never
12 been excavated.

13 MR. BUDRUS: Okay. I guess what
14 we'd like to do now is -- and if you have any
15 other questions that come to your mind, go ahead
16 and ask them. What I'm looking for now is any
17 input, recommendations, ideas or concerns that we
18 should utilize in developing the strategy to
19 restore the house, just whatever you have.

20 We'd like to use in -- to get as much
21 information as we can so that when we develop the
22 strategy, we make it fully coordinated. And as we
23 develop it, there will be periodic reviews and
24 continued public communication so that there are

1 no surprises when we're done.

2 Basically what I'm looking for is any ideas
3 you guys have that would be used in developing
4 that strategy.

5 MS. KAREN NANCE: I signed up. I
6 thought you were going to go down the list of
7 people who signed up, but you're not. It doesn't
8 matter?

9 MR. BUDRUS: We can.

10 MS. KAREN NANCE: Well, it doesn't
11 matter.

12 MR. BUDRUS: Why don't you just
13 start.

14 MS. KAREN NANCE: Okay. I'm Karen
15 Nance, and I have a few points that I wanted to
16 make.

17 We now have an opportunity to make history
18 come alive in Green Bottom Plantation, the stories
19 of all the people, peoples white and
20 African-American, can be told if we develop a plan
21 that takes into account all the history of the
22 site. We will have not only a first class
23 heritage education facility, but we will also have
24 a tourist destination attraction unlike any other

1 in the region.

2 In order to accomplish this, we need to dry
3 up the pond of water located directly in front of
4 the historic Jenkins House because this pool of
5 water is damaging -- endangering the structural
6 integrity of the house.

7 In addition we need the develop a visitor
8 intake center where visitors can be greeted,
9 operations can be ran, handicap accessibility
10 mitigated, heritage programs that cannot be
11 performed on original plantation sites presented
12 and a museum dedicated to the African-American
13 heritage can mitigate the loss of the
14 African-American site at Green Bottom.

15 The restoration work needs to be of the best
16 quality and dependent on archeological and
17 historical research. The native American
18 artefacts excavated at Green Bottom need to be
19 brought back to Green Bottom and displayed and
20 interpreted in the visitor center.

21 In conclusion, such a site would enable Green
22 Bottom to be all inclusive with wetlands for
23 environmentalists to study and bird-watchers to
24 enjoy the wildlife, a wildlife management area for

1 hunters and a major historic site for heritage
2 education and tourism.

3 The Department of Natural Resources and
4 Culture and History could organize joint nature
5 and heritage programs. This is what I have always
6 supported and continue to support at Green Bottom.

7 MR. BUDRUS: Thank you, Karen. Can
8 I get a copy of that, too, just in case we miss
9 something?

10 MS. KAREN NANCE: Yes. I get
11 tongue-tied, so it's better if I do it.

12 MR. BUDRUS: That's okay. That's
13 okay.

14 Okay. Peter Samosky.

15 MR. SAMOSKY: She's got her hand
16 up.

17 MR. BUDRUS: Oh, okay. Go ahead.

18 MS. BEVERLY WHITE: Beverly White.
19 My question is how large is the pond which she
20 refers to being drained? How large an area has to
21 be drained?

22 MS. KAREN NANCE: A couple hundred
23 feet or a little better wide and just the width of
24 where the driveway used to go down and over to

1 where the Turkey Creek --

2 MS. BEVERLY WHITE: There's a river
3 flowing around about 20 acres.

4 MS. KAREN NANCE: No, no, not of
5 wetlands. You know, there's dry land below the
6 house. We'd like to put some of the buildings
7 back on it. But the land is already dry.

8 MS. BEVERLY WHITE: Okay.

9 MR. BUDRUS: I think if -- the
10 numbers that you had shown me before, I think if I
11 multiply it out, it's somewhere around a half
12 acre. That's just off the back of my memory. The
13 20 acres I think was your entire area. That
14 wouldn't be 20 acres drained. That would be 20
15 acres total.

16 So, that's -- you know, we'd have to look at
17 that. But what they were looking at was -- I
18 think what you really mean was to extend the lawn
19 area on the river side of the house.

20 MS. KAREN NANCE: It's about -- the
21 water is about 100 feet or 107 feet or so in front
22 of the house now, and the original plan called for
23 it -- I tried with my ruler to tell on the map --
24 about 300 feet in front of the house.

1 So, you know, we'd be going back about
2 another couple hundred feet back to where it was
3 originally, which was just like a little wetland
4 stream I think originally in the front, and just
5 in front of the house, between where the road came
6 in. What was originally flooded by the beavers is
7 all that we're concerned about.

8 MR. BUDRUS: And that's their
9 proposal.

10 Well, ma'am, that will be considered, yes.

11 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: Wendell
12 Argabrite, A-r-g-a-b-r-i-t-e. What's the purpose
13 of draining this?

14 MS. KAREN NANCE: Well, I know that
15 the Corps didn't seem to think it bothered the
16 house, but I've been in house construction for a
17 long time, and that foundation is lower than what
18 the basement floor is. And I feel like that water
19 being so close to the house is really -- there's
20 mold on the front brick and there's a lot of
21 moisture there and the trees are bothering me --
22 they're dying -- that were on the front lawn. And
23 I like trees. And there's mushrooms up in them.

24 So, I think the idea was so that, you know,

1 the tree roots could dry out, the ones in front of
2 the house, and then the house itself would be able
3 to drain better. See, now all that rainwater
4 comes off the house and it goes down the yard and
5 hits the pond of water, and it used to have a
6 larger dip in the front yard.

7 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: I'm very
8 familiar with that.

9 MS. KAREN NANCE: Yeah, and then it
10 would run into Turkey Creek, whereas now the soil,
11 you know, as it builds up over the years keeps
12 getting more and more saturated around the house
13 when it can't go, which is why it's a perfect
14 swamp.

15 It's got that lay out there. I dig in it
16 doing archeology, which makes it wonderful for
17 you-all to have as a swamp because it, you know,
18 doesn't drain. And so the water around the house
19 doesn't drain either. It needs to be able to run
20 further from the house and get into Turkey Creek.

21 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: Okay. You
22 say the trees are dying?

23 MS. KAREN NANCE: Yeah.

24 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: I was up

1 there this week, and they are not. Not only that,
2 but some of those trees are sycamore trees which
3 are river bottom trees and they're used to having
4 their roots wet, and water is not going to kill
5 them all.

6 MS. KAREN NANCE: Well, Greg picks
7 up limbs. He can tell you.

8 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: There's
9 always limbs down on trees, healthy trees, year
10 round --

11 MS. KAREN NANCE: Do you see the
12 big --

13 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: -- but the
14 trees around there, they're all leafed out and
15 they have no appearance of dying.

16 But the only reason you want that then is to
17 preserve the house?

18 MRS. KAREN NANCE: Right. That's
19 the only reason I want it moved, and that's why I
20 didn't -- wasn't it --

21 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: But if it's
22 not damaging the house, well, then you're not
23 interested in having it drained?

24 MRS. KAREN NANCE: Well, see,

1 that's where the thing is. I believe it's
2 damaging the house. I would like to see a study,
3 a written study, that -- percolator -- perking
4 tests and everything out there to show that that
5 soil not being overly saturated around the house.

6 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: But you are
7 saying then that if there's no damage being done
8 to the house, then you're not interested in having
9 it drained? That's the only reason for it?

10 MRS. KAREN NANCE: Well, I will say
11 that I know there's damage being done to the
12 house.

13 MR. BUDRUS: Okay. That's one of
14 the things that we're going to consider and we'll
15 look into and have someone from geotech take
16 another look at that. But we have had
17 geotechnical engineers -- I'm tongue-tied now --
18 evaluate that.

19 I thought that the concern was, one, that the
20 wetland was affect the foundation of the house;
21 two was that I thought you wanted more area for
22 historical activities than there is there
23 currently now.

24 MRS. KAREN NANCE: Well, if we went

1 down the side. But mostly I really feel like
2 essentially like when there's flooding and, you
3 know, you have a flash flood and water comes in a
4 hurry, it can't get out Turkey Creek as well as it
5 used to be able to. And having that in the very
6 front like the doesn't give any place for the
7 water to build up like a wetland should.

8 I mean wetlands are supposed to help in
9 flooding because they're not wet 100 percent of
10 the year in the sense that they're not flooded 100
11 percent of the year.

12 So, instead of helping when you keep that
13 pool there, there's nowhere for that water to go
14 where it would normally fill that area up and then
15 drain out. But so that does concern me, too.

16 MR. BUDRUS: Okay. And we have
17 your concerns and we'll look at them. We'll look
18 at those and we'll look at your point of view,
19 too.

20 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: I'm Peter
21 Samosky.

22 MR. BUDRUS: Okay.

23 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: And thank you
24 for your letter to the paper. It terrified me,

1 and that's why I'm here.

2 I think the Corps went to a great deal of
3 trouble, and one of the primary reasons was to
4 create a habitat. That's why things got flooded,
5 and that's why there's this existing wetland in
6 front of the house.

7 If you take 200 feet out of there, the
8 boardwalk that is there now is useless and you've
9 taken the best bird-watching area in the county
10 away from us to accomplish relatively nothing.

11 My point is if you want to build anything out
12 there, you have to have a very powerful reason to
13 remove habitat they went to a great deal of
14 trouble to put in, to build anything. I just
15 don't believe that can be the spot. That can't be
16 the best spot to build anything. Put the museum
17 on the super block where people can come and see
18 it and --

19 MS. KAREN NANCE: You can't --

20 MR. BUDRUS: Okay.

21 MS. KAREN NANCE: If the historic
22 preservation is moving an historic structure --

23 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Well, don't move
24 the structure. Preserve the house. Preserve it

1 to death. Preserve it and dig it down and clean
2 every block with a toothbrush. But don't take
3 away habitat we went to a great deal of trouble to
4 put in. I just can't believe that's the best
5 place to build anything.

6 MR. BUDRUS: I'd like to have your
7 concerns, but let's try not to argue.

8 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: My concern is
9 about keeping the place to -- I know there's a lot
10 of difference between the preservationists and the
11 wildlife people, but, my heavens, there's not
12 enough wetland around, which is why this happened
13 to start with. And to remove anything, one inch
14 of wet land, I just don't -- I've not heard
15 anything to justify that.

16 MR. BUDRUS: There are -- there are
17 ways around that, though. If you fill in an acre
18 of wetland, you create another acre somewhere
19 else. So, there are ways to mitigate that.

20 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Well, I think
21 you also need to take into account that there's a
22 boardwalk there now for observation, you know, and
23 it's on the back side of the house. If you stand
24 in the house and look across that pond, that's

1 where the boardwalk is. If you drain that, that
2 boardwalk is now useless.

3 MR. BUDRUS: And that would have to
4 be mitigated, but there are options we can
5 evaluate. And your point is well taken, and we
6 had, you know, several letters come in, voicing
7 the same concerns, the effect that this would have
8 on the wetland and the effect that this would have
9 on the annual use of the wetland.

10 So, those concerns have to be looked at, too.

11 MR. BUDRUS: Ned Jones.

12 MR. NED JONES: First of all, what
13 I've tried to do in my involvement with the Green
14 Bottom Society is to really build on what I think
15 is a very positive situation, and that is to see
16 -- rather than focus on what the differences have
17 been in the past between the various groups, to
18 see what we could do collectively to really make
19 this the best attraction we could possibly make
20 and also at the same time restore the historical
21 heritage that we really have at that site.

22 I think what Congressman Rahall has done,
23 what Senator Byrd has done in this legislation is
24 really wonderful. And I think when we look at

1 what they have done and the potential that they
2 have, that this can be a site that Culture and
3 History can be very proud of, that can bring a lot
4 of people. But at the same time, what we have to
5 also do I think is to work with the people, with
6 the wetlands, with everything that exists out
7 there right now and see what -- what collectively
8 working together we can really accomplish.

9 Let me tell you, I'm in another issue called
10 a regional airport issue where we're finding it
11 very difficult for people to work together, and
12 it's sometimes extremely disappointing.

13 And I see this as an opportunity because of
14 the funding that is available to us in this
15 county. And I know that Congressman Rahall is
16 interested in the wetland issue; he's interested
17 in what the DNR, what the hunters have to do, and
18 he's also interested in the historical
19 significance of the Jenkins House.

20 And so what I as one individual am interested
21 in is trying to see how we bring all of this
22 together. And the Green Bottom Society passed a
23 resolution which says that we want to be proactive
24 in this whole approach, that we want to work with

1 people on this situation, that we want to see what
2 can be developed.

3 We think that what is put in the legislation
4 which calls for restoration will really change
5 that house out there because that restoration, my
6 understanding is from talking to Congressman
7 Rahall's representative, Jim Zoya (Phonetic), is
8 that that is not just a house but is also the
9 outbuildings that go with the house.

10 I don't know how many of you-all have ever
11 been to Blennerhassett to see what an attraction
12 Blennerhassett can be. But I would think what a
13 wonderful thing that would be in our county if we
14 could have something of that nature that could
15 draw people to this area.

16 And so how do we do that and how do we work
17 with the people with the wetlands to be able to
18 make sure that that's another attraction. There
19 shouldn't be one attraction versus another or one
20 winner and one loser. If we get into that
21 situation, I can tell you exactly what's going to
22 happen. Nobody is going to win.

23 And so what we want to do is that we passed a
24 resolution supporting that we proactively work

1 together on this whole issue, that we work with
2 Culture and History and everybody else to see what
3 can be done to really develop the potential of
4 that site, to see what can be done, as Karen has
5 talked about, as far as developing a historic
6 museum for the Underground Railroad, for the black
7 experience.

8 One of the things that we also talked about
9 is because of the fact of that being a Clover
10 Indian site and all the significance that's there,
11 but there's nothing out there that really if you
12 go out there right now shows you that. I mean
13 think about the history of this county, those many
14 years ago when we had the Clover Indian site, you
15 know, then those villages were there, and it's all
16 gone.

17 When people talk about studying history, one
18 of the saddest things I think in West Virginia is
19 we start talking about history, it really starts
20 about 1863, you know. And we really need to go
21 back and reflect on all the history of the region
22 and capitalize on it.

23 And it was a tough issue, I can tell you. A
24 lot of people have worked hard and on both sides

1 of this issue. And what we agreed to do with the
2 Green Bottom Society resolution was that we wanted
3 to put aside the issue of water and where water is
4 and figure out first what our attraction is going
5 to be. And if someday in the future we decided
6 there might be an additional need because of what
7 was there and we could draw more people there and
8 if we work well with the wetlands, if we work well
9 with the DNR and everything else, if we -- we
10 wanted to reserve the right to go back and revisit
11 that.

12 But let's see how much money we can draw
13 down. Let's see what an attraction you can make,
14 because if everybody in this room works together,
15 I think a lot of good things can happen. We can
16 bring a lot of people to Huntington, you know,
17 pull people in here who are going to really be
18 interested and really start letting people know
19 how special our area is.

20 So, that's -- that's what we're trying to do.
21 That's what we agreed to do as the Green Bottom
22 Society, and that's what I pledge to go ahead and
23 work on as hard as I can.

24 I'm happy to answer questions.

1 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: I see a couple
2 of problems there. I'm hopeful -- you're a good
3 ways from Huntington in Green Bottom, but I'm just
4 concerned if you build anything there that's going
5 to cause an attraction, if it gets a lot of
6 people, you've got parking lots, you've got
7 pavements. The birds that I go out to see are not
8 there. They're gone. They are not going to be
9 there. I mean --

10 MR. NED JONES: So, you don't think
11 it's mutually compatible?

12 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: It doesn't
13 appear to be. The way the place is laid out now,
14 I don't say how that is.

15 MR. NED JONES: How many acres are
16 there?

17 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: See, I think
18 that's a bit of a red herring. There's not enough
19 acres there. But most of those are not wet. And
20 again, it's the shore birds that I'm talking about
21 that go to the shore. And where else -- there is
22 not another place -- there are certain birds that
23 you're only going to see in that pound in front of
24 that house.

1 And it may seem like a really trivial thing
2 to some of you-all, but where else in this county
3 are you going to be able to see those? I don't
4 know of any place.

5 MR. NED JONES: So, it's your
6 opinion that the house shouldn't be restored?

7 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: No, I'm all for
8 restoring the house. I'm just concerned about
9 this idea of an attraction, of a tourist center.
10 I think it's incompatible with the wetlands, and I
11 really think you must really -- I'm concerned
12 about that.

13 MR. NED JONES: I think if you see
14 the house -- first of all, the legislation calls
15 for the restoration. As I understand it, the
16 restoration is not just for the house but for the
17 principal outbuildings that were part of what was
18 there originally, the kitchen, the office, the
19 barn, whatever you had in that environment.

20 It is not -- I think if you want to be
21 historically correct, I don't think you want to
22 put buildings there that are going to all of a
23 sudden stick out there. This isn't a -- but maybe
24 we have -- say, for instance, one of the things

1 we've offered to do is we have a barn where I grew
2 up in Point Pleasant that was probably built in
3 the 1830s we would like to give to the group if
4 they just want to move it down because it's a
5 period piece. And maybe within that barn and that
6 setting, you have the opportunity to have an
7 underground railroad museum, to have a museum on
8 the Clover Indians and what they did for the area.

9 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: What about
10 parking?

11 MR. NED JONES: Well, maybe what
12 you do -- and the question is and what's the --

13 MR. BUDRUS: We'll be able to look
14 at that.

15 MR. NED JONES: -- is how you do
16 that. I know one of the suggestions has been is
17 whether you could put parking and paving on the
18 other side of Route 2 and have an underpass there
19 under the road or some other way of being able to
20 access that, because obviously there isn't enough
21 if you want to bring -- if you want to bring the
22 cars in.

23 But I think when you have a historic landmark
24 of this significance, you don't want to say you

1 have it but you're not going to allow people to
2 frequent it.

3 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: No, I agree.
4 But realistically how are you going to fund it?
5 Since 1996, the Division of Culture and History is
6 staffing it. I've been out there a hundred times
7 and have never been able to get in.

8 MR. NED JONES: Well, I think what
9 it has to become is a significant historic site,
10 and I don't think right it is -- as you look at
11 the architecture of that house, the significance
12 is what it once was. The roof is not the type of
13 roof. The outbuildings are not there now.

14 So go ahead and you get the full feel of what
15 that environment was like at that time. And one
16 of the great things is I think that because of
17 having Senator Byrd and Congressman Rahall that I
18 believe that with what they mandated that the
19 Corps do, that between the three of them that
20 there's going to be adequate funding to make this
21 all happen because that's what the law requires.

22 So, if you can -- the question is if you can
23 make it happen, let's make it happen the right way
24 so that we can all work together and -- and think

1 about the attraction. I think some people want to
2 go up and see the historic site. Then we would
3 say here is another experience. Think about the
4 bird-watching and the floral and aquatics and
5 everything that's out there, go over to the museum
6 that might be in a barn with the underground
7 railroad black experience and get a flavor and
8 feel for all that they went through, the Clover
9 Indians and that whole period of time.

10 I think it would be a wonderful experience
11 and it would go -- but to have that happen, we've
12 all got to try to see how we can make it work
13 together. I know it's tough for some people about
14 the water and everything else, but what we agreed
15 to do as a group is let's put aside our
16 differences and work on what we have in common to
17 see if we really can't make this a winning
18 situation.

19 MR. BUDRUS: What we'd like to do
20 is try to work together to see if we can come up
21 with something that's good for both sides. It may
22 not be perfect, but hopefully we can satisfy the
23 interests on both sides. And that's what we want
24 to try. We want to work together to get to that

1 point. And I think there's some possibilities
2 here.

3 Go ahead.

4 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: I want to
5 know approximately how many visitors you-all have
6 there a year now?

7 MR. NED JONES: You know, I'm not
8 sure, because one of the --

9 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: Somebody
10 should know. There should be a log, a sign-in
11 log.

12 MR. NED JONES: Okay. But if you
13 would, let me finish.

14 What I'm talking about is not what is there
15 but what we have a potential to have there.
16 Blennerhassett at one time was nothing but a
17 foundation and is now a significant attraction.

18 One of the reasons a lot of people who were
19 concerned from the Green Bottom Society was that
20 you can go in right now into the floor joists, you
21 know, of the first floor and stick a butter knife
22 up into those floor joists several inches.

23 I mean there are a lot of significant
24 problems, structural problems, going on there.

1 They're allowing this house to rapidly, in my
2 opinion, just deteriorate. And so the first
3 concern was to stop that.

4 The second one is, and what this legislation
5 calls for, is restoration. Restoration is a lot
6 different than what we have there right now. What
7 we have right now is just a house that's slowly I
8 just think sort of rotting away.

9 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: Well, do
10 you have any estimate on how many people you're
11 going to get?

12 MR. NED JONES: No, sir. My --
13 once again, my thought is not what is there but
14 what we have a potential for. And let me give you
15 an analogy.

16 You know, we're fighting -- and I'm going to
17 give you this issue again because I've worked so
18 hard on it. We're fighting an airport issue, and
19 the people from -- some of the people from
20 Charleston are saying, well, you don't have enough
21 passengers to support a new regional airport.

22 My response to that was if we build the
23 airport and certain companies come in, they're
24 going to create the additional usage that we need.

1 In same tone, I think that if you take this
2 site and you develop -- I mean you don't have the
3 outbuildings there. You have the central
4 structure, which is the house, but not the kitchen
5 and not the office and various outbuildings that
6 go with that that really make up that whole image
7 of what it was back in the 1850s and 1860s.

8 That's the attraction I think that will bring
9 people to this area.

10 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: Well,
11 that's a -- that's a nice speech and everything
12 like that. But we have to still have some idea of
13 how many people are coming there a year to know
14 whether there would be that much interest in it.

15 MR. BUDRUS: We haven't got to that
16 point yet, I think.

17 MS. NANCY HERHOLDT: We have
18 figures. We are open to the public and promote
19 that we are available three days a week ten to
20 four, I believe.

21 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: That's not
22 accurate. That's not true.

23 A VOICE: No, it's not true.

24 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: You may

1 promote it, but it's not true. But go ahead. How
2 many people?

3 MS. NANCY HERHOLDT: Those are --
4 those are when we are available to the public,
5 from ten to four three days a week. In one year
6 and 12 months, we see about 400 people at this
7 time trying just to come in and tour the house.
8 The future is a lot --

9 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: 400 people?

10 MS. NANCY HERHOLDT: But right now,
11 we're realizing about 400 people.

12 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Well, I'd ask
13 that you keep in mind that those ponds out there
14 -- you've got the north pond; you've got another
15 pond -- are the only place for shore -- if you can
16 walk right there on that boardwalk, that is the
17 only place you have protected shore you can get
18 to. If you've got to --

19 MR. BUDRUS: What I was saying is
20 we can create that somewhere else.

21 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: I'm going to say
22 keep that in mind, but that a real thing to a lot
23 of people, and there's way more than 400 people go
24 out there and look at the fish, the pond and look

1 at the birds.

2 MS. BEVERLY WHITE: The wetlands --
3 there were some wetlands there originally? I mean
4 just not like a small strip, as I recall from the
5 slide?

6 MR. BUDRUS: Yes, the existing
7 wetlands were there for quite some time.

8 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Before the
9 Corps.

10 MS. BEVERLY WHITE: But what you're
11 talking about was existing wetlands before? It
12 was not made by the Corps?

13 MS. KAREN NANCE: It was made by
14 the Corps in front of the house.

15 MR. WENDELL ARGABRITE: No.

16 MS. CLARA KNIGHT: My name is Clara
17 Knight.

18 MR. BUDRUS: Could we have it one
19 at a time so that he can record that, though?

20 MS. CLARA KNIGHT: And the pool
21 that we are talking about is not an original
22 wetland. It didn't appear there until the Corps
23 made it. It was dry.

24 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Then the slide

1 is incorrect.

2 MS. CLARA KNIGHT: What I was
3 trying to get to, '92, that was after the Corps
4 came.

5 MR. BUDRUS: What we have here is
6 this is the existing Green Bottom wetlands -- not
7 to scale on this drawing, though. I'll admit
8 that. But that is the existing Green Bottom
9 wetlands that has been there historically.
10 Between I'd say the late eighties, early nineties
11 and today, due to the beaver dam activity, the
12 level of that wetland has gone up about a foot to
13 foot and a half. That is true, and that has
14 happened naturally based on the beaver dam
15 activity.

16 But that wetland was there and has been there
17 for years. It's just that the level is a little
18 bit higher now than it was in the late eighties.

19 MS. KAREN NANCE: But was it a pool
20 of water or just merely wetlands? Because I know
21 that wetlands are not -- this is Karen Nance -- is
22 necessarily wet as far as standing water goes a
23 hundred percent of the year, because I have a
24 Master's in geography. So, the wetlands that

1 you're talking about did not have standing water
2 in them most of the time. But there was -- up
3 from the house, there was an area that had some
4 shallow water in it --

5 MR. BUDRUS: Right here.

6 MS. KAREN NANCE: -- for some time,
7 because I was out there at Clover in the 1980s
8 when we dug at the archeology site, and I was
9 there many times and the front lawn was dry.
10 Clara has photographs of the front lawn being dry
11 when they lived there. You couldn't see the
12 water.

13 But there was some wetlands up river from the
14 house that stayed like, you know, fairly wet, with
15 some standing waters in it, more like a little
16 creek.

17 MR. BUDRUS: And that's reflected
18 by the change in the water elevation over the last
19 ten years, yes. I do agree there.

20 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: I have a
21 question, Wayne.

22 MR. BUDRUS: Go ahead.

23 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: My name is Susan
24 Pierce. And then -- with respect to the wetland,

1 when you showed the historic photograph that was
2 dated 1906, was the wet area in front of the house
3 in that picture?

4 MR. BUDRUS: We can go back and
5 look at the picture, but it's almost impossible to
6 tell based on that photograph. It's an old --

7 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: My point would
8 be the association of the wet area, not using the
9 term "wetland" specifically, but the historic
10 character of that land feature during the time of
11 occupation of the house by the General.

12 MR. BUDRUS: At one time, that area
13 was drained. There was drain tile put in. The
14 area was drained. It was used as farms or
15 orchards.

16 MR. MASLOWSKI: Okay. The wetlands
17 were drained in 1870 and -- between 1870 and
18 between 1880, according to the historic records.
19 Basically all that you see in wetlands today was
20 probably wetland soils and wetlands
21 prehistorically, and --

22 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: But at the time
23 when the General was there, Bob? I mean you can
24 only go back as far as 1870s, 1880s in the

1 historic records?

2 MR. MASLOWSKI: That's when the
3 entire Green Bottom area, according to the
4 newspaper accounts, was drained and the wetlands
5 were turned into prime cropland.

6 MR. BUDRUS: I couldn't tell you
7 the exact extent of that wetland during the 1800s
8 based on what we know now.

9 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: And I guess it
10 would be hard to understand the natural -- you'd
11 have to look at all that to determine what's the
12 natural water table, water area or water content
13 of the land as opposed to what man has done to it?

14 MR. BUDRUS: Uh-huh.

15 MS. SUSAN PIERCE: I mean you could
16 trace that and the change over each decade.

17 MR. PETE SAMOSKY: Did it not say
18 it was prehistorically wetlands? Did I not hear
19 that?

20 MR. MASLOWSKI: Yes. All the soils
21 there are wetland soils. And if you look at the
22 distribution of the archeological sites, the sites
23 are all on the high ground. The stuff where you
24 don't have sites is wetland space.